



MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

DAY OF SERVICE, JANUARY 17, 2011

Corporation for
**NATIONAL &
COMMUNITY
SERVICE** 

25th Anniversary



“Life’s most persistent and urgent question is: What are you doing for others?”

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. devoted his life to advancing equality, social justice, and opportunity for all. He challenged us to build a more perfect union and taught us that everyone has a role to play in making America what it ought to be. With his leadership, our nation made great strides against racial discrimination and toward increased civil rights.

January 17, 2011 will mark the 25th anniversary of the first observance of the Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday. More than 40 years after his death, Dr. King’s examples can continue to guide us in addressing our nation’s most critical issues today. Each of us can contribute to strengthening our own communities by serving in Dr. King’s honor on the King Holiday and throughout the year. And, by making service part of our daily lives, we can help realize Dr. King’s dream. Together, we can ensure that more young people graduate from high school; that Americans of all ages have healthier futures; consume less energy; support our military families and veterans; and that we increase employment, financial stability, and affordable housing for vulnerable individuals and families.

What Is the MLK Day of Service?

After a long struggle, legislation was signed in 1983 creating a federal holiday marking the birthday of Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The federal holiday was first observed in 1986, making 2011 the 25th anniversary of the King federal holiday. In 1994, Congress designated the holiday as a national day of service and charged the Corporation for National and Community Service with leading this effort. Taking place each third Monday in January, the MLK Day of Service is the only federal holiday observed as a national day of service – a “day on, not a day off.” The MLK Day of Service empowers individuals, strengthens communities, bridges barriers, addresses social problems, and moves us closer to Dr. King’s vision of a “Beloved Community.”

Why Serve on MLK Day?

Dr. King recognized the power of service to strengthen communities and achieve common

goals. Service is integral to meeting national challenges such as poverty, economic insecurity, illiteracy, hunger, environmental degradation, and more.

In addition to helping solve serious problems, service brings people from different backgrounds together, and benefits those who serve. On this 25th anniversary, it is especially fitting that Americans come together in service that not only honors Dr. King, but builds lasting change in communities.

What Types of Service Are Encouraged?

All types of service are encouraged, particularly projects that connect participants to ongoing service throughout the year, have a lasting impact, and are helping to bring about community solutions. Service projects are often more meaningful to participants if they connect to the life and teachings of Dr. King and include time to reflect upon his life and teachings.

Who Can Participate in the MLK Day of Service?

People of all ages, backgrounds, and abilities are encouraged to serve on King Day, and to make the day the beginning of an ongoing commitment to a cause that is meaningful to them and addresses a need in their communities.

How Can I Continue to Serve After MLK Day?

As part of his United We Serve initiative, President Obama has called upon all Americans to make service a part of their daily lives. Where and how you serve is up to you – the important thing is to get involved. Visit SERVE.gov to find a volunteer opportunity in your community and for ideas on planning your own project.

2010 Highlights

Hundreds of thousands of Americans joined in volunteer service projects across the country as part of the 2010 Martin Luther King Jr. National Day of Service. President Obama and First Lady Michelle Obama joined cabinet secretaries, elected officials, nonprofit and business leaders, and Americans of all ages and backgrounds in rolling up their sleeves to honor Dr. King's legacy through service. More than 10,000 service projects took place in all 50 states, addressing a multitude of pressing social issues from poverty and hunger to homelessness and Haitian relief efforts. Visit MLKDay.gov to read a summary and watch a video of this historic day.

MLK Day of Service Grantees and Partners

This year the Corporation awarded \$600,000 in grants to intermediary organizations — Campus Kitchens Project, National Alliance of Faith and Justice, North Carolina Campus Compact, Points of Light-HandsOn Network, Service for Peace, and Youth Service America. These intermediaries will sub-grant to groups across the country to organize service projects on the MLK Day of Service.

The Corporation and The King Center lead the MLK Day of Service in partnership with numerous national nonprofit organizations, faith-based and community groups, state service commissions, government agencies, educational institutions, and corporations and businesses. For a list of partners, visit MLKDay.gov.

Other Resources

A wide variety of free MLK Day resources for individuals and organizations are available at MLKDay.gov.

These include:

- ★ Tool to register your King Day project
- ★ Tool to find a King Day project
- ★ Action Guides — step-by-step instructions for planning a project that will have lasting impact.
- ★ Tips & Tools — resources to support:
 - ★ Collaborations and partnerships
 - ★ Media, marketing, and social media
 - ★ Fundraising
 - ★ Project development
 - ★ Project management
 - ★ Incorporating service-learning into your project
 - ★ Volunteer development
- ★ Webinars
- ★ Weekly newsletter

Project Registry

To register your MLK Day project, go to MLKDay.gov and click 'register your project.' This takes you to a list of websites where you can register your project. Be sure to include MLK Day or King Day of Service in your project title and description so it will be easy to find on websites that list MLK Day of Service volunteer opportunities. Some sites also provide a check off box for King Day. Please use it, if available, and include King Day in your title or description.

For More Information, visit MLKDay.gov or e-mail MLKDay@cns.gov.